

Washington, DC-Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23), a member of the House Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, today touted the passage of \$123.5 million he secured in funding for projects in the Fiscal Year 2009 House Appropriations bill including **\$60 million**

for the State Homeland Security Grant Program's (SHSGP) Operation Stonegarden which began as a successful pilot program in 2005 that involved 14 border states.

"As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I have the unique ability to gain funding for projects throughout my expansive district," said Rodriguez. This year we'll bring home money for stronger border security, cyber security, gain a stronger ability for DHS to consult with border communities and fund other projects important to Texas and our nation's security.

"Continued funding of Operation Stonegarden will allow us to ensure that the Border Patrol and our local law enforcement have the best resources available to fight crime and increased risks faced by law enforcement in our part of Texas, particularly along the border," continued Rodriguez.

Below is a summary of the funding and provisions Rodriguez would secure in the 2009 DHS Appropriations Subcommittee on which he serves :

- **\$60 million for the State Homeland Security Grant Program's (SHSGP) Operation Stonegarden-** Operation Stonegarden began as a successful pilot program in 2005 that involved 14 border states. The initiative gave border states the flexibility to use DHS grant funding for coordination among state and federal law enforcement agencies at our borders.
- **Carrizo Cane study** which would direct the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) to submit a comprehensive plan to eradicate invasive plants that inhibit security along the US-Mexico border including in Eagle Pass and other Texas border areas not included in other programs.
- **Consultation with Federal Agencies and Border Communities-** This would require DHS to consult with other cabinet secretaries, State, local, and tribal governments and landowners to minimize the impact of the fencing on the communities where it is proposed. Additionally, this would add to the 2008 language written by Rodriguez and Senator Hutchison by directing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to assess the consultation process used in 2008 for projects planned on the Texas border.
- **\$25 million** to build a new Border Patrol station in Comstock, TX.
- **\$3 million** for improvements and enhancements for the Border Patrol station in Presidio.
- **\$30 million for Border Interoperability Demonstration Project**, which would be for Northern and Southwestern border communities that lack fully interoperable communications in

order to conduct threat detection, operations and public safety. DHS would need to select participating communities by January 8, 2009.

- ü **\$500,000** for the City of Del Rio to fund an Emergency Operations Center that would allow federal, state and local officials to best respond to weather, fire, police, and any other emergencies that may occur.
- ü **\$500,000** for a study that would allow Del Rio to be best prepared for a flood or other natural disaster.
- ü **\$3.5 million for state and local cyber security training at UTSA** to be used to develop a curriculum in which communities throughout the country may best protect themselves from cyber crime.
- ü **\$1.5 million** for improvements and enhancements to a Border Patrol Check point in El Paso.

Below are additional projects that would be notable for the area, Texas, and the country in the Homeland Security Appropriations Bill:

- \$950 million for State Homeland Security grants;
- \$850 million for Urban Area Security Initiative grants, \$30 million above last year;
- \$800 million for Fire Grants, \$50 million more than last year;
- \$315 million for Emergency Management Performance Grants, \$15 million more than last year;
- \$50 million for the Metropolitan Medical Response System;
- \$50 million for REAL ID grants;
- \$50 million for Interoperable Communications Grants;
- \$35 million for Emergency Operations Centers;
- \$217 million to pay for law enforcement officer benefits for Custom and Border Patrol (CBP) officers;
- \$200 million, \$47 million more than for fiscal year 2008, for the Emergency Food and Shelter program. Additional resources for this program are especially critical now, as more and more people turn to food banks and other community support organizations to meet their basic needs. This is the largest single appropriation for this program in its 25 year history;
- \$4.8 billion for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, mandating that \$800 million of this be targeted to identifying dangerous criminal aliens and prioritizing these individuals for removal once an immigration judge orders them deported. The President had proposed no additional dedicated funds for this fundamental priority;
- For U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Subcommittee mark includes funding for 4,085 additional personnel, including the 2,200 additional Border Patrol agents and 539 additional CBP personnel that were requested. On top of this, the Subcommittee mark provided \$42 million to fund an additional 734 CBP Officers at airports and land borders and 100 additional agricultural specialists;
- Regarding border funding, the Subcommittee bill repeats a requirement in last year's bill that the Department notify the public 15 days before it waives any law in order to build fencing

or other tactical infrastructure along the border;

- Also like last year's bill, we are requiring the Department to present an analysis of its proposed infrastructure and technology solution for individual border segments so that Congress can be assured that the Department is taking the most effective approach;

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Congressman **Ciro D. Rodriguez** (TX-23) serves as a Member of the powerful House Appropriations Committee and the Veterans Affairs Committee. For more information about Rodriguez, see his website at rodriguez.house.gov